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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

MILK SUPPLY OF BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

By John W. Kerr, Assistant Surgeon-General, United States Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

On account of the reported low mortality of infants under 1 year of age in the city of Buenos Aires during 1907, inquiry was made through the State Department as to the methods of control of the milk supply in that city, especially with reference to the milk which is consumed by children. In response to this request, there were received from the American consul-general October 1, 1909, summarized translations of the various laws, ordinances, and decrees controlling the milk supply of the city of Buenos Aires. According to the Year Book of the above-mentioned city for the year 1907, the milk consumed in that city comes from rural dairy farms and dairy cows kept within the city limits. The former supply represented 93 per cent of the total, or 364,179 liters brought daily into the city by the various railways.

The following is a summarized translation of the various laws, ordinances, and decrees of the city of Buenos Aires relating to milk supplies,^a furnished by Consul-General Bartleman, from which it is seen that marked legislative effort has been made looking to the purity of such supplies:

Proprietors of milk shops and dairies, also employees, the number of cows, and the source of the milk sold, must be registered at the office of the sanitary board, and any change in the personnel is to be reported immediately. No person suffering from a contagious disease shall be employed in a milk shop or dairy. The milk must not be kept in living apartments and is to be kept in hermetically sealed receptacles. The receptacles in which milk is brought to the city, and in which it is sold, must be such as can be easily washed on the inside; stoppers must be made of some unoxidizable material, such as glass, china, or rubber—the use of other materials being absolutely forbidden. Sanitary inspectors will report fortnightly the condition of dairies, and the quality of milk, whatever may be its origin.

Any infringement of this ordinance will be fined 50 pesos (\$21.23 United States currency) for the first offense; 100 pesos (\$42.46 United States currency) the second, and closure of the establishment for the third.

Dairies must observe the following rules:

1. The water used by animals shall either be running, or shall come from a spring well. Should the analysis of the water not prove satisfactory, the establishment may be closed, should no new well be opened.

^a Official Digests of the City of Buenos Aires, 1907, pages 270-276.

2. All employees must have a certificate from the sanitary department certifying that they are free from contagious diseases.

3. Whenever one or more cases of a contagious disease occurs among the people dwelling in the house where the milk shop or dairy is, or among the animals, the cows shall be taken out and the place disinfected and closed.

The tuberculinizing of the animals' milk which is to be used for nourishing human beings is obligatory and shall be performed by the sanitary inspectors whenever necessary. Health certificates must be posted in the stalls in front of each animal. The proprietor of a dairy will not be permitted to remove an animal which is under observation, or such as have had a reaction from tuberculins.

DISTRIBUTION OF MILK.

Milk may only be sold at certain fixed places, milk shops, and dairies, and may only be carried from house to house by carts with springs. It may be carried on horseback in exceptional cases.

Everything connected with the sale and transportation of milk, and all receptacles for milk, must be kept scrupulously clean. All utensils must be marked with the name of the individual or company to which they belong.

Permission must be obtained from the municipality in order to establish a place for the sale of milk.

Milk shops must be situated in airy, clean, well-lighted rooms, which have good running water and proper drains. The place where the milk is kept shall be such as to prevent any alteration occurring in the milk, and the temperature should not exceed 15° C. During the summer milk must be kept in refrigerators.

Milk sold to the public must have a density of between 1.0285 and 1.034, and must contain at least 25 per cent of butter and 10 per cent of dry residuum.

Skimmed milk, or milk deprived of its cream, may be sold, but its nature must always be noted on its receptacle. Such milk must always have a density of from 1.030 to 1.035 and must contain one-fifth per cent of butter and leave a residuum of 9.5 per cent.

The sale of milk adulterated with water or any other substance whatsoever is strictly forbidden. All classes of milk allowed to be sold may be pasteurized and sterilized by ordinary methods, and sold as such.

The municipal chemical department and the sanitary inspectors shall supervise the distribution of milk.

Persons selling or distributing milk must be provided with a certificate from the sanitary authorities stating that they are free from transmissible disease. Whenever any contagious disease shall break out in any place where milk may be stored or sold, such place shall be immediately closed, and is not to be reopened until, in the judgment of the sanitary authorities, all danger to public health shall have disappeared.

Summarized translation of an ordinance regarding the hygienization of milk issued by the municipality of Buenos Aires, December 18, 1907.

For the purpose of guaranteeing the wholesomeness as well as preventing the adulteration of milk supplied to the population of Buenos Aires, the municipality adopts the following measures:

Persons or establishments engaged in supplying milk to the public shall be required, on and after October 1, 1908, to provide hygienic conditions at places where it is produced as well as subjecting it to one of the usual processes of pasteurization, sterilization, maturation, etc.

The skimming of milk, or depriving it of its fat, is prohibited.

All vessels containing milk to be supplied to consumers must be conspicuously marked with the name of the establishment where the milk has undergone a hygienic and sterilizing process.

The sanitary department of the city shall inspect milk establishments, and the owners thereof shall be required to give all information as to the density, amount of cream, and other conditions of the milk, in order to prove its sameness to the milk delivered to the public.

All vendors of milk which has not been produced under hygienic conditions, or which has been altered or adulterated after leaving the dairies, shall be subject to a fine of \$50 (Argentine paper; \$21.23 United States currency) for the first offense, and \$100 (Argentine paper; \$42.46 United States currency) thereafter.

Summarized translation of a supplementary decree issued by the municipality of Buenos Aires, December 11, 1908, regarding the hygienization of milk.

Establishments where milk is hygienically treated must have all openings in the walls covered by wire screens to prevent the entrance of insects.

No product is to be sold unless it has been previously inspected by the sanitary authorities, and the ordinance regarding temperature, etc., complied with.

Whenever it shall be deemed necessary, the sanitary department will take samples of the milk for the purpose of analysis. Milk arriving at railway stations is also to be inspected.

A monthly return of the analyses of milk is to include the daily grade of acidity, butter, density, impurities, etc., and is to be sent to the sanitary department; and a record of such analyses to be kept, to be ready, at all times, for the inspection of municipal employees.

Milk with an acidity below 16° or above 20° (Bornic) shall not be allowed to be pasteurized.

THE SANITATION OF ROTTERDAM.

By R. A. C. WOLLENBERG, Assistant Surgeon, United States Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

The prompt suppression of the recent cholera outbreak in the city of Rotterdam has furnished an eloquent instance of the value of an excellent municipal sanitary administration. The city abounding with innumerable canals and a great floating population, both contributing to the difficulty of fighting the spread of the disease, the first being subject to contamination by the second, the latter habitually and unnecessarily depending on the first for water supply, has given an object lesson of what can be done by good sanitary laws and their vigorous enforcement.

The first cases of cholera appeared August 20; the city was declared free of the disease September 11, there having been a total of 34 cases and 15 deaths. The disease was not confined to a limited area, but appeared in all parts of the city, mostly along the waterways.

Few new sanitary measures were instituted during the course of the outbreak. Aside from the prosecution of general regulations and the plans already established in anticipation of such an emergency, very little was done. Most important, however, was compelling the river men to use filtered water.

An investigation of the work of the department of public sanitation and disinfection was afforded me through the courtesy of the director, who superintends street cleaning and sprinkling, snow removal, disposal of sewage, cleaning of sewers, collecting and disposal of excreta and waste from outlying districts, collecting and disposing of manure and garbage, operating of public privies and urinals, dredging and cleaning of canals, and all public disinfection. The working force of the department consists of about 750 men.

To the excellent administration and work of this department may be attributed a great measure of the success of the campaign against cholera. The department naturally works hand in hand with the health bureau and the water board. That the death rate of the city of Rotterdam has fallen in the last twenty-five years from 25 to about 12.5 is largely the result of the system, that in thoroughness and in many other features is deserving of imitation.

Street cleaning and sprinkling.—The street area under the service of the cleaning division has quadrupled since 1882. In December, 1908,